

ABSTRACT
SOCIAL WORK

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AN EXPLORATORY DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF ARGUMENTATIVENESS AND
VERBAL AGGRESSIVENESS AMONG GRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AT CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY

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Thesis dated May, 1998

The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a difference between 1st and 2nd year graduate social work students argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness. When these variables are used during interpersonal communication, there is a significant need for them to be identified through empirical research, and alternative forms of communication explored in order to enhance the professional and personal self of the social worker.

To examine this purpose the researcher conducted an exploratory descriptive research design. A self administered 48-item questionnaire was given to 50 graduate social work students. A nonprobability convenience sample was used for this population.

The null hypotheses of this study were rejected at the .05 level of significance. Results revealed that there was no statistical significant difference between 1st and 2nd year, male and female, graduate social work students argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness.

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SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AT CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY

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Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

This thesis is dedicated to my parents--Ada and Henry Johnson for all of their support and faith in me. To my beloved aunt, Annie McDowell, the "wind beneath my wings." To my grandmothers, Lena Harris and Odessa Johnson, the inspiration of my endeavors. Also, a special thanks to the participants and other assistants for this study, Professor Hattie Mitchell, Dr. Bruce Wade, Tanya Jennings, Claude Waller, Jr. and all of my friends; thank you for your endless support.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The school year has begun, and each graduate student is prepared to learn and process the information taught regarding the profession of social work practice. As the year progressed, personality traits of each student surfaced. Suddenly, words that offend began to surface in the academic setting. Students started attacking each other's ideas, concepts and thoughts as they were verbalized. This social work intern thought that surely, these are not graduate students who are preparing for clinical social work practice with clients. Immediately, interpersonal communication styles among graduate student social work practitioners developed as an interest for this researcher. Hence, an exploratory descriptive study of argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness among graduate students in the School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University was developed.

The words and sentences that were used to express thoughts and feelings were destructive. These words actually shaped and possibly distorted how students perceived each other. Thus, if graduate social work students communicated this way to one another, imagine the

communication style when working with clients and colleagues. Personal language styles are the development of learned personality traits. Personality traits are established early in childhood and remain constant throughout adulthood. Theorist Sigmund Freud traced the roots of behavior to personality components formed in infancy and childhood--needs, defenses, identifications, etc. He also deemed any changes that occur in adulthood as simply variations on already established themes, he believed that an individual's character structure is relatively fixed by late childhood.¹ This character structure is learned and reveals itself in the course of interacting and communicating in an academic environment.

Hence, individuals seek environments that provide comfort and stability in their behaviors. The patterns of behavior act as ways of adapting to a particular environment. As the individual attempts to adapt, there are forms of interpersonal communication which are used to defend their behaviors. A conversation involves the verbal exchange of ideas and thoughts as they relate to some situation or environment. When this exchange is occurring there must be an understanding of sender and receiver skills.

¹James W. Vander Zanden, Human Development, 5th ed. (U.S.A.: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1993), 495.

Communication styles of individuals may not utilize the above described skills. Therefore, resulting in destructive communicative styles which may be hazardous for themselves and those in which they are communicating with. Some destructive forms of communication include argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness. Both of these are communication styles that can be present during conversation or interpersonal communication between a sender and a receiver.

Argumentativeness is a personality trait in which individuals present and defend positions on controversial issues while attacking the positions that other people take.²

This form of communication can be destructive. Arguing may contain aggressive behaviors that may be revealed due to some understanding situation or defense. This defense may be a cognitive drive to move into a hierarchy so that an individual will do whatever it takes to achieve success. Success enhances the level of the neurotransmitter serotonin in the brain, failure and negative social feedback inhibit the effects of serotonin and may lead to possible aggression.³ Aggressive behavior,

²D. A. Infante and A. S. Rancer, "A Conceptualization and Measure of Argumentativeness," Journal of Personality Assessment 46 (March 1986): 72-80.

³R. Sylwester, "The Neurobiology of Self-Esteem and Aggression," Educational Leadership (February 1997): 75-79.

when carried to the extreme, can be maladaptive. Feist states that aggressive behavior is learned through the observation of others, direct experiences with positive and negative reinforcements, training or instruction, and unsocially acceptable beliefs.⁴ Aggressive behavior is not only the physical infliction of pain upon an individual, but it is also a verbal form of aggressive behavior.

Verbal aggression is a form of communication that attacks an individual's self-concept in order to make the person feel less confident in themselves. Verbally aggressive messages may include: character attacks, competence attacks, insults, teasing, ridicule, profanity, or nonverbal cues.⁵ As the messages are sent by the sender, the receiver is experiencing a perception of faulty self-concept. Self-concept is the composite of ideas, feelings, and attitudes that a person has about his or her own identity, worth, capabilities, and limitations.⁶ Verbal aggressiveness is a destructive form of communication, it is a maladaptive behavior that can lower a person's self-concept and inflict emotional pain. This

⁴J. Feist, Theories of Personality (New York: CBS College Publishing, 1985), 150.

⁵Ibid., 61.

⁶L. Urdang and H. H. Swallow, Mosby's Medical, Nursing and Allied Health Dictionary (St. Louis: The C.V. Mosby Company, 1983), 95.

maladaptive behavior presents a barrier in effective communication and interpersonal relationships.

Thus, clear communication and the development of interpersonal relationships are particularly relevant to the field of social work. Literature on argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness among social work practitioners is limited. Therefore, this study has prompted the researcher to respond to this need, to enhance knowledge about the professional and personal development of a beginning social work practitioner, and to develop empirical data as a foundation for future research.

Statement of the Problem

Argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness have been identified as communication styles that are destructive in nature. Among the various human activities that are the subject of attention, none has aroused deeper concern than man's aggressiveness.⁷ Though aggression has always been an important social problem, developments during the past few decades have fully justified increased concern. Simple aggressive behaviors can produce widespread disastrous consequences.⁸ Destructive behavior, such as argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness can simultaneously harm a vast number of people.

⁷A. Bandura, Aggression: A Social Learning Analysis (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), 1.

⁸Ibid.

Most of the present information reviewed, examined argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness as compliance-gaining strategies and the lack of interpersonal communication skills among professionals. Can identification of argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness as destructive communication styles increase awareness of these traits in order to enhance the professional and personal development of social workers? If so, what can be done to become aware of these traits and develop ways to alter the destructive behavior?

Theoretical models of aggression provide various reasons of why aggressive behavior occurs, therefore, showing the risk of the relationship between argumentation, verbal aggression and the social worker's professional and personal development. Risk factors associated with professional and personal development of the social worker include lack of self-awareness, undeveloped practitioner relationships with the client and the colleague, unethical practices and modalities, poor communication skills, and incompetency in fulfilling the needed roles and skills of a social work practitioner.⁹

Therefore, two relationships will be explored and described. First, the relationship between argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness in 1st and 2nd

⁹S. Jayaratne, T. Croxton, and D. Mattison, "Social Work Professional Standards: An Exploratory Study," Social Work 42, no. 2 (March 1994): 187-196.

year graduate social work students, whom are continuously developing their professional and personal selves. Second, the relationship between argumentativeness, verbal aggressiveness, and gender differences.

Significance and Purpose of the Study

If the argumentative and verbal aggressive behaviors of graduate students in the school of social work are not changed, the professional and personal development of social workers will be devalued; no longer being effective in social work practice with clients. Argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness are learned behaviors, and are exhibited when one wishes to attack the self-concept of another. The roles and skills of the social worker are vital in providing effective intervention modalities to the client and in maintaining professional relationships with colleagues.

Therefore, when argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness is used by the social work practitioner during interpersonal communication; there is a significant need for these variables to be identified through empirical research, and alternative forms of communication explored in order to enhance the professional and personal self of the social worker.

The present study will look at argumentativeness, verbal aggressiveness, and gender differences among graduate students in the School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta

University. There are two objectives of this study. The first, is to explore and describe the relationship between argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness in graduate students; the second, is to explore and describe the relationship between argumentativeness, verbal aggressiveness and gender. This study will explore whether there is a statistical significant difference between 1st and 2nd year graduate social work students and male and female levels of argumentation and verbal aggression.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The relationship between argumentation, verbal aggression, and gender have been explored by various professions, but the literature about these two variables in social work is grossly inadequate. Therefore, this section will discuss relevant information researched on these variables while integrating their importance to the professional and personal development of the social worker.

Argumentativeness

Argumentativeness is a stable trait which predisposes individuals in communication situations to advocate positions on controversial issues and to attack verbally those with different positions.¹ Schill administered three scales to 55 men and 55 women studying whether people who described themselves as consistently engaging in a pattern of self-defeating behavior are argumentative in social situations or are more likely to be compliant. Results and data indicated that women who scored higher on the scales were less likely to report being argumentative in social

¹T. Schill, "Self-Defeating Personality, Argumentativeness, and Assertive Self-Statements," Psychological Reports 79 (1996): 11.

situations and have the belief that arguing is a hostile, aggressive, and combative communication style.

Verbal Aggressiveness

Infante and Wigley III discussed verbal aggressiveness as a personality trait that predisposes persons to attack the self-concepts of other people instead of their positions on the topics of communication.² This form of communication can make a person feel less appreciative of self. The effects of verbally aggressive messages in interpersonal communication provide sufficient and compelling justification for studying verbal aggression in order to gain control over its occurrence.³ Verbal aggression can effect the self-concept of persons in many ways. For example, there may be hurt feelings, anger, irritation, embarrassment, discouragement and others such as relationship deterioration or termination.⁴ Infante and Wigley III offer several reasons for the occurrence of verbal aggression in interpersonal communication. These include frustration (having a goal blocked), social learning (conditioned to behave aggressively), psychopathology (transference where the person who is doing the attacking

²D. A. Infante and C. J. Wigley, III, "Verbal Aggressiveness: An Interpersonal Model and Measure," Communication Monographs 53 (Fall 1984): 61.

³Ibid., 24.

⁴Ibid., 61.

uses verbal aggression to symbolize unresolved conflict), and argumentative skill deficiency (individuals resort to verbal aggression because they lack the skill to deal with the social conflict).⁵

Aggressiveness in interpersonal communication occurring in different ways, such as argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness, can be either constructive or destructive. Constructive types produce satisfaction and enhance interpersonal relationships, while destructive types lead to interpersonal dissatisfaction and relationship deterioration.⁶ These types of aggressiveness are viewed as products of an aggressive personality trait. The aggressive personality is located with respect to the total personality trait.⁷

Argumentativeness and Verbal Aggressiveness

Infante, Trebing, Shepherd and Seeds researched the relationship of argumentativeness to verbal aggression. These researchers felt a need to make a clear distinction between the two variables. They conceptualized argumentativeness as a personality trait which predisposes an individual to recognize controversial issues, and to

⁵Ibid., 62.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

advocate positions on them.⁸ In contrast, verbal aggressiveness was a personality trait that leads one to attack the self-concept of others instead of refuting their positions on issues.⁹ The conceptualization of these two variables was used to produce a model that suggested that argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness are unrelated personality traits. The distinction between the two were important because verbal aggression is a destructive form of communication, that produces damage of self-concepts, embarrassment, frustration, damaged relationships, and anger.¹⁰ Later, the researchers go on to conclude that although the two are unrelated, verbal aggression may in certain circumstances be related to argumentativeness.

Within this same study, 79 males and 89 females were administered the Argumentativeness Scale and the Wiseman and Schenck-Hamlin scenario to disguise focus on verbal aggression. Results and data indicated that persons who were high, moderate, or low in argumentativeness were about equal in their preference for verbal aggression. Also, the data and analysis indicated that males were more likely than

⁸D. A. Infante, J. D. Trebing, P. E. Shepherd, and D. E. Seeds, "The Relationship of Argumentativeness to Verbal Aggression," The Southern Speech Communication 50 (Fall 1984): 68.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid., 69.

females to prefer the use of verbal aggression.¹¹ The researchers of this study make conclusions that verbal aggression often stems from a lack of skill in arguing and that argumentativeness is a constructive personality trait that should not be synonymous with verbal aggression.

While examining the relationship between argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness, researchers also elude to sex differences found in these variables. Recent studies suggest that males are more likely than females to use verbal aggression. The theoretical explanation for this is that males have been conditioned to be more competitive, dominant, and assertive. Therefore, the use of verbal aggression is more compatible with male than female role behavior.¹²

Gender and Aggression

Gender differences in aggressive behavior has been the subject of a large amount of journal articles and books. This variable will be used in this study to show a significant relationship between gender and aggression. Differences in aggressiveness between men and women have been found to be small and inconsistent.¹³ Years of

¹¹Ibid., 75-76.

¹²Ibid., 70.

¹³M. B. Harris and K. Knight-Bohnhoff, "Gender and Aggression II: Personal Aggressiveness," Sex Roles 35, nos. 1 & 2 (1996): 27.

research concludes that there seems to be an association between gender and aggression.

Harris and Knight-Bohnhoff investigated how gender, ethnicity, age, and education influence aggressiveness. They surveyed 115 male and female college students and 79 persons working on a military base. Gender differences in verbal aggression tended to be in the same direction but are smaller and less consistent.¹⁴ Participants of their study were administered the Bliss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire and asked about their own aggressive behaviors. In both samples, men scored significantly higher than women on the Physical Aggression Scale of the questionnaire, but not on the other scales. In the military sample, men indicated that they expected to behave more aggressively than women. Positive correlations among different aspects of aggressiveness were found for both men and women. Increasing age and education were associated with lower aggressiveness in both genders, suggesting that aggressiveness may be susceptible to modification over the course of one's life.¹⁵

Gender differences in verbal aggressiveness in some adult populations are small.¹⁶ This may prohibit a significant difference between males and females levels of

¹⁴Ibid. 28.

¹⁵Ibid., 36-37.

¹⁶Ibid., 37.

aggressiveness. Sallinen-Kuparinen and colleagues have conceptualized verbal aggression as a form of hostility inflicting psychological damage during communication.¹⁷ This behavior can include character attacks, insults, teasing or ridicule. Men and women differ in verbal aggressiveness, women use more prosocial verbalizations and are less overtly verbally aggressive.¹⁸ Verbal aggressiveness was studied in Finland and the United States using the Verbal Aggressiveness Scale. A Finnish sample included 232 students from the University of Jyväskylä and the American sample included 145 students from West Virginia University. There was a significant main effect for sex which accounted for 3% of the variance.¹⁹ The results of this study confirmed the stereotype that men are more overtly verbally aggressive than women. Aggressiveness in women is viewed by society as gender-inappropriate behavior.²⁰ Other researchers have replied critically to the above mentioned results about reported gender differences.

¹⁷A. Sallinen-Kuparinen, C. A. Thompson and D. W. Klop, "Finnish and American University Students Compared on a Verbal Aggression Construct," Psychological Reports 69 (1991): 681.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., 682.

Burgoon responds to Sallinen-Kaparinen and colleagues with an analysis of serious errors, presentation, and interpretation. Because the Finnish and American student study showed that men were more verbally aggressive, and that there was no significant difference between cultures, Burgoon deemed this questionable. The Verbal Aggressiveness Scale was inappropriate for measuring differences in culture, and the authors wrongly present a series of analyses using inappropriate tests.²¹ Burgoon concluded, that measures on self-reported use of verbal aggression simply does not speak to gender appropriate language behavior, and that cultural differences should be taken into consideration when interpretation of data is made.²² In consideration of this critical analysis, other factors should be determined when studying perceptions of argumentation and verbal aggressive behavior.

Infante, Rancer, and Jordan studied affirming/nonaffirming style and dyad sex to determine if they influence perceptions of argumentation and verbal aggression in an interpersonal dispute. The participants of the study consisted of 78 male and 107 female students enrolled in undergraduate communication courses. Verbal aggressiveness is a highly destructive form of communication and is often

²¹M. Burgoon, "Verbal Aggression: A Critical Reply to Reported Gender Differences," Psychological Reports 69 (1991): 1202.

²²Ibid.

confused with argumentative behavior.²³ Participants of the study read a play script that contained messages exchanged between two individuals engaged in a conflict episode. All statements were argumentative in nature except for some statements that contained verbal aggression. The individuals communicated with either affirming or nonaffirming style. The sex of the dyad was also considered. Results of this study was descriptive in nature and included that fewer mistakes were made in the perception of verbal aggression in the conflict when the participants communicated with affirming rather than nonaffirming style. More verbally aggressive but less argumentative conduct was perceived when the individuals communicated with a nonaffirming style. Male dyad disputes were described as being argumentative and female dyads contained more verbal aggressive communication.²⁴

In understanding communication styles and gender differences, researchers should also include these variables relationship to professional and personal development of the social worker. As will be described in this study, argumentation and verbal aggression can be traits and forms of communication that may terminate or deteriorate

²³D. A. Infante, A. S. Rancer, F. F. Jordan, "Affirming and Nonaffirming Style Dyad Sex and the Perception of Argumentation and Verbal Aggression in an Interpersonal Dispute," Human Communication Research 22, no. 3 (March 1996): 317.

²⁴Ibid., 320.

relationships within the professional arena of social work practice.

Professional and Personal Development

Social work is the professional activity of helping individuals, groups, or communities to enhance or restore their capacity for social functioning and to create societal conditions favorable to their goals.²⁵ To carry out the social workers purpose, they work with people to carry out and achieve certain objectives. These objectives include the following: (1) help people enlarge their competence and increase their problem-solving and coping abilities; (2) help people obtain resources; (3) make organizations responsive to people; (4) facilitate interactions between individuals and others in their environment; (5) influence interactions between organizations and institutions; (6) influence social and environmental policy.²⁶

In association with carrying out and achieving practice objectives, social workers have values and ethical standards that must be adhered to. All professions have value preferences that give purpose, meaning and direction to people who practice within them.²⁷ Values are beliefs

²⁵D. H. Hepworth and J. Larsen, Direct Social Work Practice: Theory and Skills, 4th ed. (California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1993).

²⁶Ibid., 6-8.

²⁷Ibid.

that govern how individuals should behave in a certain situation. The values of the profession of social work refer to strongly held beliefs about the rights of people to free choice and opportunity, to preferred conditions of life that enhance people's welfare, about how members of the profession should view and treat people.²⁸ These values and objectives are stated as high levels of commitment to the profession of social work. Personal values of a social worker sometimes coincide with those espoused by the majority of social work practitioners.²⁹ Professional and personal development of the social work practitioner is very critical to the delivery of services and the maintenance of healthy working relationships. This development includes a variety of behaviors and conduct that must be practiced to uphold the values and standards of the profession.

By chance, behaviors such as argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness can be destructive, therefore, altering the professional and personal development of the social worker. Professional standards of care establish the accepted behavioral conduct of social workers in practice.³⁰ Jayaratne, Croxton, and Mattison completed an exploratory study that examined professional social work

²⁸Ibid., 9.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰S. Jayaratne, T. Croxton and D. Mattison, "Professional Standards: An Exploratory Study," Social Work 42, no. 2 (March 1997): 185.

behaviors and beliefs about appropriate conduct in six areas. These areas of concern included intimate relationships, dual relationships, mixed modalities, and financial transactions.³¹ The sample for this study was drawn from a stratified random sample of 1,494 social workers practicing in rural and urban areas. A 10-page questionnaire was mailed to all participants reporting personal behavior. Results show that 4.6% saw nothing wrong with developing intimate relationships with clients, 21.2% acknowledged developing friendship with a client, 43.6% reported use of mixed modalities, and 3.7% knowingly advise clients to engage in activities that are illegal.

These reported percentages show evidence that social work education and current practice standards are out of touch with the realities of practice.³² In addition, social workers may be losing sight of important principles and may need more specific guidelines to direct behavior that is not destructive, but constructive in communication. In order to redirect practice behaviors, social work practitioners must also become aware of their personal selves. Both developments are continuous processes that promote service delivery to clients and other professionals.

Harris studied the significance of self-awareness in clinical practice with diverse clients. Self has been

³¹Ibid., 187.

³²Ibid., 196.

conceptualized as the ego, or one's own person. Also, the self is the organized center of human experience, which is itself experienced as cohesive and enduring.³³ Personal development includes an understanding of self.

Understanding self is a very complicated process, an intricate and multifaceted construction that is a central motivational concern throughout life.³⁴

Self-awareness can influence professional practice. It is essential because being disciplined and aware of self remains one of the professions major tools that must be developed into a fine instrument.³⁵ Professional and personal development consists of having the ability to look at and recognize oneself. Recognition can assist with knowing when your noncaring, destructive self is prohibiting you from helping or reaching out to others.

As inclusive of this study, having a destructive type of argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness can impede service delivery and development. These destructive traits can be a part of one's awareness of self and those things which may prohibit constructive communication and interaction between the social work practitioner and the client. Harris concludes that as long as our way of

³³M. S. Harris, "Developing Self-Awareness/Racial Identity With Graduate Social Work Students," Smith College Studies in Social Work 67, no. 3 (June 1997): 589.

³⁴Ibid., 589-590.

³⁵Ibid., 591.

perceiving the world on which our communication styles and behavior patterns are based is out of awareness, it is not accessible to being deliberately changed and will continue to contribute to misunderstanding and conflict.³⁶ As social work practitioners continuously become aware of themselves, it is imperative that an understanding of the learning process is known, so that behaviors can be understood and managed.

Theoretical Framework

Early psychological theories sought to explain human behavior primarily in terms of instinctual forces.³⁷ This meant that aggression was a behavior that was natural. Instinctual explanations of aggression assumed many different forms depending on whether they were inborn motivational mechanisms, organized responses, or stimulus functions wherein external cues evoke aggressive actions supposedly without any prior learning.³⁸ There are many explanations of aggression. Psychoanalytic models suggest that human behavior is regulated by the sexual instinct and the self-preservative ego instinct.³⁹ Cognitive models suggest that human behavior is regulated to a large extent

³⁶Ibid., 606.

³⁷A. Bandura, Aggression: A Social Learning Analysis (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), 11.

³⁸Ibid., 12.

³⁹Ibid.

by anticipated consequences and this cognitive drive will cause individuals to do whatever it takes to achieve.⁴⁰ Social learning models suggested that human behavior should be examined according to the external influences on responsiveness.⁴¹ The research literature suggests many reasons for why aggressive behavior occurs.

Theories of aggression have not thoroughly explored the relationship between argumentation, verbal aggression, and the development of the social work practitioner. Understanding of the above mentioned behaviors and clinical development however, can be broadened by the theories of this study. These theories will be the Ecological Model and the Social Learning Theory. Both will be used in this study to explore and describe the behaviors of argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness and their implications for social work practice.

The Ecological Model will be used to explore environmental factors and their relationship to the development of aggressive behaviors. This model is a natural extension of the "person-in-environment" perspective.⁴² It addresses exposures within the environment and ways by which individuals interact within

⁴⁰R. Sylwester, "The Neurobiology of Self-Esteem and Aggression," Educational Leadership (February 1997): 76.

⁴¹Bandura, Aggression: A Social Learning Analysis, 41.

⁴²Hepworth and Larsen, Direct Social Work Practice: Theories and Skills, 77.

those environments. When people are exposed to aggressive behaviors, they tend to develop learned traits that contain similar behaviors. In relation to this study, social work practitioners must understand the "person-in-environment" as it relates their own behaviors and the behaviors of their clients. Recognizing that learned behaviors play a major role in how interaction and communication occurs within environments and relationships.

The Social Learning theoretical framework will be used in this study to understand destructive aggressive behaviors, such as argumentation and verbal aggression. This theory views aggressive behavior as a continuous reciprocal interaction between the behavior and its controlling environmental determinates.⁴³ Patterns of behavior can be acquired through direct experience or by observing the behavior of someone else. In relation to this study, it is understood that argumentation and verbal aggression are behaviors that were learned during environmental interactions.

Social behavior is extensively regulated by verbal cues.⁴⁴ Often there can be a great number of cues that are spoken which can influence how people will behave. For example, requests, suggestions, commands, and modeling.

⁴³Bandura, Aggression: A Social Learning Analysis, 43.

⁴⁴Ibid., 46.

These are all examples of how verbal implications influence which emphasis of concern are directed is modeling. The observed actions of others acquire response-directing properties through reinforcement or rewarding that produces certain behaviors.⁴⁵ Modeling plays an important role in learning aggressive behaviors.

The actions of the modelor can serve as social prompts to facilitate similar behaviors in the observer. If an individual observes a dual interaction and conflict arises, the observer is constantly aware of the behavior of the modelor. If the modelor responds to the conflict with argumentation or verbal aggression and is rewarded after the behavior, the observer will learn to cope with conflict using destructive behaviors of argumentation and verbal aggression. It is evident from informal observation that human behavior is to a large extent socially transmitted, either deliberately or inadvertently, through the behavioral examples provided by influential models.⁴⁶

Aggressive behavior can also be transferred through family instruction. Parents train their children through precept, modeling, and example, to be aggressors.⁴⁷ Condoning aggression may not be a part of teaching children how to cope with conflict. Modeling of this nature places a

⁴⁵Ibid., 46-47.

⁴⁶Ibid., 68.

⁴⁷Ibid., 94.

lasting effect on interpersonal communication and relationship development. This learned behavior can be carried on through the entire life cycle. When an individual is confronted with conflict occurring in a certain environmental context, then their initial response is to react or cope in the same ways that have been observed and learned throughout life.

The Social Learning Theory of Human Aggression adopts the position that man is endowed with neurophysiological mechanisms that enable him/her to behave aggressively, but the activation of these mechanisms depends upon appropriate stimulation and is subject to control.⁴⁸ Therefore, aggression may take different forms such as argumentation or verbal aggression, by which the frequency of the behavior, situations in which it is displayed, and targets that have been selected for attack can be largely determined by social experiences.

In relation to this particular study and theory, argumentation and verbal aggression can be viewed as learned behaviors. Those individuals who have observed these behaviors followed by rewarding may continue what has been learned. For the purpose of this study, one must understand that social work practitioners may have learned the behaviors of argumentation and verbal aggression, but through self-exploration and development they can prevent

⁴⁸Ibid., 29.

professionals and with clients. High levels of argumentation and verbal aggression occurring because of observational learning supports the social learning theory and ecological model. Therefore, unlearned behavior can be obtained if awareness of self is achieved and ethical standards are practiced by social workers.

Statement of the Hypotheses

Is there a statistical significant relationship between 1st and 2nd year graduate students verbal aggressiveness? The hypothesis will then be stated as follows:

H₁: There will be a statistical significant difference between 1st and 2nd year graduate students verbal aggressiveness.

Is there a statistical significant relationship between 1st and 2nd year graduate students argumentativeness? The hypothesis will then be stated as follows:

H₂: There will be a statistical significant difference between 1st and 2nd year graduate students argumentativeness.

Is there a statistical significant relationship between male and female graduate students verbal aggressiveness? The hypothesis will then be stated as follows:

H₃: There will be a statistical significant difference between male and female graduate students verbal aggressiveness.

Is there a statistical significant relationship between male and female graduate students argumentativeness.

H₄: There will be a statistical significant difference between male and female graduate students argumentativeness.

Definition of Terms

Argumentation: To advocate positions on controversial issues and to verbally attack positions of other people.⁴⁹

Gender: One who is of male or female classification.⁵⁰

Graduate Student: One who has obtained a Bachelor's Degree and currently attends school to complete requirements for a Master's Degree.⁵¹

Professional and Personal Development: Developing an ongoing personal awareness of self and developing constructive intergroup dialogue communication and conflict processes which are safe for effective social work practice.⁵²

⁴⁹D. A. Infante and A. S. Rancer, "A Conceptualization and Measure of Argumentativeness," Journal of Personality Assessment 46 (March 1986): 72-80.

⁵⁰R. Lachmann, The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Sociology (Connecticut: The Dushkin Publishing Group, Inc., 1991), 122.

⁵¹D. B. Guralnik, Webster's New World Dictionary (New York: A Warner Communications Company, 1987), 593.

⁵²Harris, "Developing Self-Awareness/Racial Identity With Graduate Social Work Students," 589.

Verbal Aggression: To attack the self-concept of another person in addition to the person's position on a topic of communication.⁵³

⁵³Infante and Wigley, "Verbal Aggressiveness: An Interpersonal Model and Measure," 6-69.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used an exploratory and descriptive design. The exploratory design only explores the research question or hypotheses studied.¹ Also, the descriptive design resembles a "true experiment" in some aspects but lacks some of the necessary requirements.² The collection of data for measuring argumentation and verbal aggression was obtained using survey research.

Site and Setting

This study was conducted at Clark Atlanta University in Atlanta, Georgia. Clark Atlanta University is a historically African-American institution of higher learning. The setting was in the classrooms of Thayer Hall. Thayer Hall is the building in which the School of Social Work conducts classroom instruction to undergraduate and graduate students in preparation for social work practice and development. In the classrooms of this building, the

¹R. M. Grinnell, Jr., Social Work Research and Evaluation (U.S.A.: F.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 1993), 119.

²Ibid.

researcher obtained permission from the professor to distribute questionnaires fifteen minutes before class was to begin. Questionnaires for this study were distributed to 1st and 2nd year graduate students enrolled in the School of Social Work.

Sample

The sample from which this study was drawn consisted of fifty graduate students, male and female; enrolled in the School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University. Data were collected by administering questionnaires to graduate students, after obtaining permission from the professor; fifteen minutes prior to the beginning of class. The method of sampling used in this study is convenience (nonprobability) sampling. This method was used because the closest and most available subjects were used to make up the sample for this study.

Data Collection Procedure (Instrumentation)

After careful review of the literature and consideration, it was determined that self-reports of the participants argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness was necessary. Therefore, two separate scales were used for both variables. Verbal aggression is operationalized as an attack on the self-concept of another person in addition to the person's position on a topic of communication. Verbal aggressiveness was measured by the Verbal Aggressiveness

Scale (VAS). This questionnaire is designed to see how we try to get people to comply with our wishes. This survey instrument is composed of twenty questions, including statements that are true or not true when trying to influence other people. The VAS was tested-retested for reliability and validity. Factor analysis and item analyses was measured to ensure stability of the concurrent validity of the VAS.³

Argumentation is operationalized as the tendency to argue about controversial issues and to verbally attack positions of other people. Argumentativeness was measured by the Argumentativeness Scale (ARG). This survey instrument is designed to examine communication, social conflict, and dysfunctional communication. The reliability and validity of the ARG appears to be consistent. The ARG has good to excellent internal consistency and fairly good concurrent validity.⁴ This questionnaire consists of twenty questions about arguing controversial issues. There are five response categories ranging from almost always true to almost never true. The entire questionnaire will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

³D. A. Infante and C. J. Wigley, III, "Verbal Aggressiveness: An Interpersonal Model and Measure," Communication Monographs 53 (Fall 1984): 61-64.

⁴D. A. Infante and A. S. Rancer, "A Conceptualization and Measure of Argumentativeness," Journal of Personality Assessment 46 (March 1986): 72-80.

Data Analysis

The data measurement instrument consisted of the rank ordering of several responses that measured the variables for this study.

The independent variables sex and graduate student classification are nominal level of measurements. These variables have no relationship to one another, therefore, being mutually exclusive. The dependent variables argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness are ordinal levels of measurement. These variables are measured according to rank order. An order that contains an index ranging from one to five, where one is almost never true and five is almost always true. Upon determination of these categorical levels of measurement, the researcher will use the statistical test known as t-test to measure the validity of the research questions/hypotheses.

This statistical test provides data analysis for differences between 1st and 2nd year graduate students and between males and females levels of argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness. The data obtained in this study will be coded into a computer and analyzed through the usage of the statistical computer program known as the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.

CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

The null hypothesis states: H_0 : There is no statistical significant difference between 1st and 2nd year graduate social work students verbal aggressiveness. Tables A1 - A48 may be found in Appendix C.

TABLE 1
T-TEST RESULTS OF VERBAL AGGRESSIVENESS BETWEEN
1ST AND 2ND YEAR GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS
(N = 50)

	Mean	SD	df	p	T-test
1st year	45.3	14.0	48	.05	0.199
2nd year	50.3	10.4			

The presentation of Table 1 provides the results that there is no statistical significant difference between 1st and 2nd year graduate social work students verbal aggressiveness. The t-value is 0.199. Notice that the 1st year graduate social work students had a mean score of 45.3 and the 2nd year graduate social work students had a mean score of 50.3. The difference between the two means was .50 point ($50.3 - 45.3 = .50$). This .50 difference is not

statistically significant at the .05 level with 48 degrees of freedom ($50 - 2$ for this t-test). This means that a 2 point difference would happen by chance less than 2 times out of 100. Thus, the researcher will accept the null hypothesis.

The null hypothesis states: H_0 : There is no statistical significant difference between 1st and 2nd year graduate social work students argumentativeness.

TABLE 2

T-TEST RESULTS OF ARGUMENTATIVENESS BETWEEN 1ST
AND 2ND YEAR GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS
(N = 50)

	Mean	SD	df	p	T-test
1st year	9.8	10.6	48	.05	0.518
2nd year	11.5	9.3			

The presentation of Table 2 provides the results that there is no statistical significant difference between 1st and 2nd year graduate social work students aggressiveness. The t-value is 0.518. Notice that the 1st year graduate social work students had a mean score of 9.8 and the 2nd year graduate social work students had a mean score of 11.5. The difference between the two means was .17 point ($11.5 - 9.8 = .17$). This .17 difference is not statistically significant at the .05 level with 48 degrees

of freedom (50 - 2 for this t-test). This means that a 2 point difference would happen by chance less than 2 times out of 100. Thus, the researcher will accept the null hypothesis.

The null hypothesis states: H_0 : There is no statistical significant difference between male and female graduate social work students verbal aggressiveness.

TABLE 3
T-TEST RESULTS OF VERBAL AGGRESSIVENESS BETWEEN
MALE AND FEMALE GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS
(N = 50)

	Mean	SD	df	p	T-test
Male	49.6	10.8	48	.05	0.276
Female	45.7	14.0			

The presentation of Table 3 provides the results that there is no statistical significant difference between male and female graduate social work students verbal aggressiveness. The t-value is 0.276. Notice that the males had a mean score of 49.6 and females had a mean score of 45.7. The difference between the means was .39 point ($49.6 - 45.7 = .39$). This .39 difference is not statistically significant at the .05 level with 48 degrees of freedom (50 - 2 for this t-test). This means that a 2 point difference would happen by chance less than 2 times

out of 100. Thus, the researcher will accept the null hypothesis.

The null hypothesis states: H_0 : There is no statistical significant difference between male and female graduate social work students argumentativeness.

TABLE 4
T-TEST RESULTS OF ARGUMENTATIVENESS BETWEEN
MALE AND FEMALE GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS
(N = 50)

	Mean	SD	df	p	T-test
1st year	11.6	9.1	48	.05	0.486
2nd year	9.6	10.6			

The presentation of Table 4 provides the results that there is no statistical significant difference between male and female graduate students argumentativeness. The t-value is 0.486. Notice that the males had a mean score of 11.6 and the females had a mean score of 9.6. The difference between the two means was .20 point ($11.6 - 9.6 = .20$). This .20 difference is not statistically significant at the .05 level with 48 degrees of freedom ($50 - 2$ for this t-test). This means that a 2 point difference would happen by chance less than 2 times out of 100. Thus, the researcher will accept the null hypothesis.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In summation, it was found that there is no statistical significant difference between 1st and 2nd year graduate social work students argumentativeness, verbal aggressiveness, and gender. Even so, it is important to notice the means in each table presented. In Table 1 the mean for first year graduate social work students was lower than 2nd year graduate social work students. Therefore, indicating that the verbal aggression variable was higher in 2nd year social work students, but not at a .05 level of significance.

Infante and Wigley III offer reasons for the occurrence of verbal aggression, such as frustration and social learning. Higher verbal aggression in 2nd year graduate students may suggest that either a goal is being blocked or that this aggressive behavior may have been learned in an environment. Thus, this learning has been transformed and exhibited within the classroom setting. In Table 2, the same occurred for the argumentativeness variable. The 2nd year graduate social work students had a higher mean indicating argumentativeness. Clearly, based on the data, verbal aggression and argumentation does exist in

both graduate level classes. There exists in the literature a relationship between argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness. Infante and his colleagues have concluded that persons who are high in argumentativeness were about equal in their preference for verbal aggressiveness.

Tables 3 and 4 indicate that men are more aggressive. They seem to enjoy arguments and attacking individuals in a destructive way. The literature suggests that men have high levels of aggression than women. This theoretical explanation has been formulated because men have been conditioned (social learning) to be more competitive, dominant, and assertive. Theorist Bandura supports that aggressive patterns of behavior can be learned through experience or observation within an environment. Exposures to argumentation and verbal aggression can develop these learned traits that present themselves in communicative-interactive environments.

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations in this study. Literature for this study was limited, therefore allowing a scanty amount of supportive empirical data. The study utilized a sample of fifty graduate students, who were enrolled in the School of Social Work at Clark Atlanta University. This did not represent the total number of graduate students enrolled in a social work program. The sample population for this study could have been a larger

size. Therefore, the findings possibly could have been found to be statistically significant and generalizable to all graduate students enrolled in a Social Work Program. Also, the data was collected using a convenience sample, allowing for an unequal distribution of independent variables.

Another limitation to the study was that the study did not give a representation of students from other geographical locations, such as the north. Graduate students in the School of Social Work come from various locations throughout the country; however, there was no indication that the participants of the study covered certain geographical locations because the variable was not included in this study.

Suggested Research Directions

While it is known that communication and interpersonal relationships play a vital role in the client-therapist relationship, further research is needed to determine:

1. What are the clients perception of the social workers argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness?
2. What community programs can be developed to appropriately deal with these destructive ways of communication?

3. Include a study that has a large sampling population;
4. Conduct this research on graduate social work students who are in different environments.

Furthermore, research is also needed regarding the seriousness of argumentative and verbal aggressive traits in social work practitioners, which can be critical to the delivery of services and the maintenance of healthy working relationships. All of these suggested research directions are necessary to determine the extent to which social workers interact and communicate with clients and colleagues.

CHAPTER SIX

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

The current study explored and described argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness within graduate social work students. Although there was no statistically significant difference between the independent and dependent variables, argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness mean scores were explored and analyzed by the researcher. Both of these personality traits are important factors when working in the social work profession. Social work is the professional activity of helping individuals, groups, communities, and organizations. In order to be competent in the required skills, social workers must be clear communicators.

As presented in this study, clear communication can be prohibited by barriers such as argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness. Empirical data from this study shows that these variables are present. As a result of this presence, there are several implications for social work practice.

1. There is a need for ethical practice standards to be developed as it relates to ongoing process of professional and personal development. For example,

training in self-awareness, aggression management, communication seminars, and interpersonal relationship development programs.

2. There must be an existence of some innovative technological technique to monitor social workers involvement in ongoing professional and personal development.

3. Social work practitioners should become knowledgeable about alternative ways to manage aggression, such as meditation or spiritual enrichment.

4. Social work practitioners must use what is gathered from personal enhancement to provide effective interventions for aggression prevention with clients.

5. Social work practitioners must be aware of communication styles used during the client-therapist interaction.

With all of these implications, there must also be future research that will examine the relationship between aggression and the social work practitioners perception of professional and personal development. Social workers face the dilemma of recognizing when aggressive behaviors are skills learned to survive in a hostile environment. Under these circumstances, any attempt to understand these behaviors in themselves will be approached with resistance unless alternative enhancement programs are offered for the profession.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO STUDY PARTICIPANTS

To All Participants of this Study:

I am a graduate student in the Clark Atlanta University School of Social Work. I am conducting a study on argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness among graduate students (1st and 2nd Year) in the School of Social Work for my masters thesis. Your participation would greatly be appreciated as part of this study. All information that you provide will be kept confidential. No identification will be given. Do not write your name on this questionnaire, so that your anonymity will be enforced.

The data obtained for this study will be analyzed solely for the purpose of completing my graduate thesis. The information requested in this study is important to the profession of Social Work because social work practitioners will have a better understanding of how argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness can devalue professional and personal development.

If you have any questions about this study, or if you are interested in the results of this study, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

NeSonya R. Johnson
MSW Student

Professor Hattie Mitchell
Thesis Advisor

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE ON ARGUMENTATIVENESS AND VERBAL AGGRESSIVENESS

Section I: Demographic Information

1. Age
 1. _____ Under 21 years old
 2. _____ 21 - 25 years old
 3. _____ 26 - 30 years old
 4. _____ 31 - 35 years old
 5. _____ 35+ years old
2. Education Status
 1. _____ 1st year graduate student
 2. _____ 2nd year graduate student
3. Gender
 1. _____ Female
 2. _____ Male
4. Race
 1. _____ African-American
 2. _____ Caucasian
 3. _____ Other (_____)
5. Marital Status:
 1. _____ Single
 2. _____ Married
 3. _____ Divorced
 4. _____ Separated
 5. _____ Widowed
6. Employment Status
 1. _____ Employed
 2. _____ Unemployed
7. Income
 1. _____ Under 10,000
 2. _____ 10,000 - 15,000
 3. _____ 15,000 - 20,000
 4. _____ 20,000 - over
8. Religion
 1. _____ Baptist
 2. _____ Protestant
 3. _____ Methodist
 4. _____ Catholic
 5. _____ Other (_____)

Section II: Argumentativeness Scale (ARG)

Instructions: This questionnaire contains statements about arguing controversial issues. Indicate how often each statement is personally true for you by placing the appropriate number in the blank to the left of the statement. Use the following numbers:

- 1 = Almost Never True
- 2 = Rarely True
- 3 = Occasionally True
- 4 = Often True
- 5 = Almost Always True

- _____ 9. While in an argument, I worry that the person I am arguing with will form a negative impression of me.
- _____ 10. Arguing over controversial issues improves my intelligence.
- _____ 11. I enjoy avoiding arguments.
- _____ 12. I am energetic and enthusiastic when I argue.
- _____ 13. Once I finish an argument I promise myself that I will not get into another.
- _____ 14. Arguing with a person creates more problems for me than it solves.
- _____ 15. I have a pleasant, good feeling when I win a point in an argument.
- _____ 16. When I finish arguing with someone I feel nervous and upset.
- _____ 17. I enjoy a good argument over a controversial issue.
- _____ 18. I get an unpleasant feeling when I realize I am about to get into an argument.
- _____ 19. I enjoy defending my point of view on an issue.
- _____ 20. I am happy when I keep an argument from happening.
- _____ 21. I do not like to miss the opportunity to argue a controversial issue.

- _____ 22. I prefer being with people who rarely disagree with me.
- _____ 23. I consider an argument an exciting intellectual challenge.
- _____ 24. I find myself unable to think of effective points during an argument.
- _____ 25. I feel refreshed and satisfied after an argument on a controversial issue.
- _____ 26. I have the ability to do well in an argument.
- _____ 27. I try to avoid getting into arguments.
- _____ 28. I feel excitement when I expect that a conversation I am in is leading to an argument.¹

¹Dominic A. Infante and A. S. Rancer, "A Conceptualization and Measure of Argumentativeness," Journal of Personality Assessment 46 (1982): 72-80.

Section III: Verbal Aggressiveness Scale (VAS)

Instructions: This scale is concerned with how we try to get people to comply with our wishes. Indicate how often each statement is true for you personally when you try to influence other persons. Use the following scale:

- 1 = Almost Never True
- 2 = Rarely True
- 3 = Occasionally True
- 4 = Often True
- 5 = Almost Always True

- _____ 29. I am extremely careful to avoid attacking individuals' intelligence when I attack their ideas.
- _____ 30. When individuals are very stubborn, I use insults to soften stubbornness.
- _____ 31. I try very hard to avoid having other people feel bad about themselves when I try to influence them.
- _____ 32. When people refuse to do a task I know is important, without good reason, I tell them they are unreasonable.
- _____ 33. When others do things I regard as stupid, I try to be extremely gentle with them.
- _____ 34. If individuals I am trying to influence really deserve it, I attack their character.
- _____ 35. When people behave in ways that are in very poor taste, I insult them in order to shock them into proper behavior.
- _____ 36. I try to make people feel good about themselves even when their ideas are stupid.
- _____ 37. When people simply will not budge on a matter of importance I lose my temper and say rather strong things to them.
- _____ 38. When people criticize my shortcomings, I take it in good humor and do not try to get back at them.
- _____ 39. When individuals insult me, I get a lot of pleasure out of really telling them off.

- _____ 40. When I dislike individuals greatly, I try not to show it in what I say or how I say it.
- _____ 41. I like poking fun at people who do things which are very stupid in order to stimulate their intelligence.
- _____ 42. When I attack persons' ideas, I try not to damage their self-concepts.
- _____ 43. When I try to influence people, I make a great effort not to offend them.
- _____ 44. When people do things which are mean or cruel, I attack their character in order to help correct their behavior.
- _____ 45. I refuse to participate in arguments when they involve personal attacks.
- _____ 46. When nothing seems to work in trying to influence others, I yell and scream in order to get some movement from them.
- _____ 47. When I am not able to refute others' positions, I try to make them feel defensive in order to weaken their positions.
- _____ 48. When an argument shifts to personal attacks, I try very hard to change the subject.²

²Dominic A. Infante and C. J. Wigley, III, "Verbal Aggressiveness: An Interpersonal Model and Measure," Communication Monographs 53 (1986): 61-69.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE RESPONSES: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, ARGUMENTATIVENESS, AND VERBAL AGGRESSIVENESS

TABLE A1

AGE

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Under 21	0	1	0.0	2.4
21 - 25	2	18	22.2	44.0
26 - 30	5	15	55.6	36.6
31 - 35	1	6	11.1	14.6
Over 36	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>2.4</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A2

EDUCATION STATUS

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1 Year	2	19	22.2	46.3
2 Year	<u>7</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>77.8</u>	<u>53.7</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A3

GENDER

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Female	41	82.0
Male	<u>9</u>	<u>18.0</u>
Total	50	100.0

TABLE A4

RACE

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
African American	9	39	100.0	95.1
Caucasian	0	2	0.0	4.9
Other	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A5
MARITAL STATUS

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Single	6	36	66.7	87.8
Married	3	3	33.3	7.4
Divorced	0	1	0.0	2.4
Separated	0	1	0.0	2.4
Widowed	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A6
EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Employed	6	30	66.7	73.2
Unemployed	<u>3</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>33.3</u>	<u>26.8</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A7

INCOME

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Under \$10,000	4	20	44.4	48.8
\$10,000 - \$15,000	0	0	0.0	0.0
16,000 - 20,000	1	0	11.1	0.0
Over 20,000	4	15	44.4	36.6
No Answer	<u>0</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>14.6</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A8

RELIGION

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Baptist	5	26	55.6	63.4
Protestant	2	0	22.2	0.0
Methodist	1	7	11.1	17.1
Catholic	1	2	11.1	4.9
Other	<u>0</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>14.6</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A9

WHILE IN AN ARGUMENT, I WORRY THAT THE PERSON I AM
ARGUING WITH WILL FORM A NEGATIVE IMPRESSION OF ME

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	1	13	11.1	31.7
Rarely True	5	13	55.6	31.7
Occasionally True	2	13	22.2	31.7
Often True	1	2	11.1	4.9
Almost Always True	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A10

ARGUING OVER CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES
IMPROVES MY INTELLIGENCE

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	2	11	22.2	26.8
Rarely True	5	12	55.6	29.3
Occasionally True	0	4	0.0	9.7
Often True	1	12	11.1	29.3
Almost Always True	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>4.9</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A11
I ENJOY AVOIDING ARGUMENTS

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	0	5	0.0	12.2
Rarely True	2	5	22.2	12.2
Occasionally True	3	13	33.3	31.7
Often True	2	8	22.2	19.5
Almost Always True	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>22.2</u>	<u>24.4</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A12
I AM ENERGETIC AND ENTHUSIASTIC WHEN I ARGUE

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	0	8	0.0	19.5
Rarely True	2	6	22.2	14.6
Occasionally True	3	6	33.3	14.6
Often True	2	10	22.2	24.4
Almost Always True	<u>2</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>22.2</u>	<u>26.8</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A13

ONCE I FINISH AN ARGUMENT I PROMISE MYSELF
THAT I WILL NOT GET INTO ANOTHER

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	4	16	44.4	39.0
Rarely True	3	7	33.3	17.1
Occasionally True	1	11	11.1	26.8
Often True	1	4	11.1	9.8
Almost Always True	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>7.3</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A14

ARGUING WITH A PERSON CREATES MORE PROBLEMS
FOR ME THAN IT SOLVES

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	3	11	33.3	26.8
Rarely True	3	9	33.3	22.0
Occasionally True	2	10	22.2	24.4
Often True	1	6	11.1	14.6
Almost Always True	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>12.2</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A15

**I HAVE A PLEASANT, GOOD FEELING WHEN I
WIN A POINT IN AN ARGUMENT**

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	1	4	11.1	9.8
Rarely True	2	6	22.2	14.6
Occasionally True	2	8	22.2	19.5
Often True	2	10	22.2	24.4
Almost Always True	<u>2</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>22.2</u>	<u>31.7</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A16

**WHEN I FINISH ARGUING WITH SOMEONE I FEEL
NERVOUS AND UPSET**

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	2	9	22.2	22.0
Rarely True	5	8	55.6	19.5
Occasionally True	1	14	11.1	34.1
Often True	1	8	11.1	19.5
Almost Always True	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>4.9</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A17

I ENJOY A GOOD ARGUMENT OVER A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	1	8	11.1	19.5
Rarely True	1	6	11.1	14.6
Occasionally True	2	11	22.2	26.8
Often True	2	9	22.2	22.0
Almost Always True	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>33.3</u>	<u>17.1</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A18

I GET AN UNPLEASANT FEELING WHEN I REALIZE
I AM ABOUT TO GET INTO AN ARGUMENT

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	4	6	44.4	14.6
Rarely True	0	9	0.0	22.0
Occasionally True	4	12	44.4	29.3
Often True	1	8	11.1	19.5
Almost Always True	<u>0</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>14.6</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A19

I ENJOY DEFENDING MY POINT OF VIEW ON AN ISSUE

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	1	3	11.1	7.3
Rarely True	0	2	0.0	4.9
Occasionally True	0	10	0.0	24.4
Often True	4	14	44.4	34.1
Almost Always True	<u>4</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>44.4</u>	<u>29.3</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A20

I AM HAPPY WHEN I KEEP AN ARGUMENT FROM HAPPENING

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	0	3	0.0	7.3
Rarely True	3	4	33.3	9.8
Occasionally True	3	11	33.3	26.8
Often True	2	11	22.2	26.8
Almost Always True	<u>1</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>29.3</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A21

I DO NOT LIKE TO MISS THE OPPORTUNITY TO
ARGUE A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	1	18	11.1	43.9
Rarely True	3	10	33.3	24.4
Occasionally True	2	6	22.2	14.6
Often True	2	2	22.2	4.9
Almost Always True	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>12.2</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A22

I PREFER BEING WITH PEOPLE WHO RARELY DISAGREE WITH ME

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	3	11	33.3	26.8
Rarely True	2	10	22.2	24.4
Occasionally True	4	11	44.4	26.8
Often True	0	6	0.0	14.6
Almost Always True	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>7.3</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A23

I CONSIDER AN ARGUMENT AN EXCITING INTELLECTUAL CHALLENGE

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	1	9	11.1	22.0
Rarely True	3	12	33.3	29.2
Occasionally True	0	10	0.0	24.4
Often True	4	5	44.4	12.2
Almost Always True	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>12.2</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A24

I FIND MYSELF UNABLE TO THINK OF EFFECTIVE
POINTS DURING AN ARGUMENT

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	5	9	55.6	22.0
Rarely True	3	14	33.3	34.0
Occasionally True	1	10	11.1	24.4
Often True	0	4	0.0	9.8
Almost Always True	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>9.8</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A25

**I FEEL REFRESHED AND SATISFIED AFTER
AN ARGUMENT ON A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE**

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	2	7	22.2	17.1
Rarely True	1	18	11.1	43.9
Occasionally True	1	13	11.1	31.7
Often True	4	2	44.4	4.9
Almost Always True	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>2.4</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A26

I HAVE THE ABILITY TO DO WELL IN AN ARGUMENT

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	0	4	0.0	9.8
Rarely True	1	4	11.1	9.8
Occasionally True	4	16	44.4	39.0
Often True	2	7	22.2	17.0
Almost Always True	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>22.2</u>	<u>24.4</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A27

I TRY TO AVOID GETTING INTO ARGUMENTS

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	0	7	0.0	17.1
Rarely True	1	6	11.1	14.6
Occasionally True	3	6	33.3	14.6
Often True	2	9	22.2	22.0
Almost Always True	<u>3</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>33.3</u>	<u>31.7</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A28

I FEEL EXCITEMENT WHEN I EXPECT THAT A
CONVERSATION I AM IN IS LEADING TO AN ARGUMENT

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	4	19	44.4	46.3
Rarely True	3	11	33.3	26.8
Occasionally True	0	5	0.0	12.2
Often True	2	3	22.2	7.3
Almost Always True	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>7.3</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A29

**I AM EXTREMELY CAREFUL TO AVOID ATTACKING INDIVIDUALS'
INTELLIGENCE WHEN I ATTACK THEIR IDEAS**

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	1	5	11.1	12.2
Rarely True	1	4	11.1	9.8
Occasionally True	2	6	22.2	14.6
Often True	1	7	11.1	17.1
Almost Always True	<u>4</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>44.4</u>	<u>46.3</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A30

**WHEN INDIVIDUALS ARE VERY STUBBORN, I USE
INSULTS TO SOFTEN STUBBORNNESS**

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	1	19	11.1	46.3
Rarely True	4	11	44.4	26.8
Occasionally True	3	8	33.3	19.5
Often True	0	0	0.0	0.0
Almost Always True	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>7.3</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A31

I TRY VERY HARD TO AVOID HAVING OTHER PEOPLE FEEL
BAD ABOUT THEMSELVES WHEN I TRY TO INFLUENCE THEM

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	0	19	0.0	46.3
Rarely True	1	11	11.1	26.8
Occasionally True	1	8	11.1	19.5
Often True	3	0	33.3	0.0
Almost Always True	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>44.4</u>	<u>7.3</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A32

WHEN PEOPLE REFUSE TO DO A TASK I KNOW IS
IMPORTANT, WITHOUT GOOD REASON, I TELL THEM
THEY ARE UNREASONABLE

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	0	17	0.0	41.5
Rarely True	0	6	0.0	14.6
Occasionally True	2	9	22.2	22.0
Often True	3	8	33.3	19.5
Almost Always True	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>44.4</u>	<u>2.4</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A33

WHEN OTHERS DO THINGS I REGARD AS STUPID,
I TRY TO BE EXTREMELY GENTLE WITH THEM

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	0	4	0.0	9.8
Rarely True	2	3	22.2	7.3
Occasionally True	4	13	44.4	31.7
Often True	0	10	0.0	24.4
Almost Always True	<u>3</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>33.3</u>	<u>26.8</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A34

IF INDIVIDUALS I AM TRYING TO INFLUENCE
REALLY DESERVE IT, I ATTACK THEIR CHARACTER

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	4	21	44.4	51.2
Rarely True	2	12	22.2	29.3
Occasionally True	1	5	11.1	12.2
Often True	1	2	11.1	4.9
Almost Always True	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>2.4</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A35

WHEN PEOPLE BEHAVE IN WAYS THAT ARE IN VERY
POOR TASTE, I INSULT THEM IN ORDER TO
SHOCK THEM INTO PROPER BEHAVIOR

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	4	20	44.4	48.8
Rarely True	3	10	33.3	24.4
Occasionally True	2	4	22.2	9.8
Often True	0	4	0.0	9.8
Almost Always True	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>7.3</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A36

I TRY TO MAKE PEOPLE FEEL GOOD ABOUT THEMSELVES
EVEN WHEN THEIR IDEAS ARE STUPID

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	1	2	11.1	4.9
Rarely True	1	23	11.1	56.1
Occasionally True	2	14	22.2	34.1
Often True	3	1	33.3	2.4
Almost Always True	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>22.2</u>	<u>2.4</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A37

WHEN PEOPLE SIMPLY WILL NOT BUDGE ON A
MATTER OF IMPORTANCE I LOSE MY TEMPER AND
SAY RATHER STRONG THINGS TO THEM

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	5	15	55.6	36.6
Rarely True	1	10	11.1	24.4
Occasionally True	2	9	22.2	22.0
Often True	1	5	11.1	12.2
Almost Always True	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>4.9</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A38

WHEN PEOPLE CRITICIZE MY SHORTCOMINGS, I TAKE
IT IN GOOD HUMOR AND DO NOT TRY TO GET BACK AT THEM

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	0	15	0.0	36.6
Rarely True	4	10	44.4	24.4
Occasionally True	1	9	11.1	22.0
Often True	3	5	33.3	12.2
Almost Always True	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>4.9</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A39

WHEN INDIVIDUALS INSULT ME, I GET A LOT OF
PLEASURE OUT OF REALLY TELLING THEM OFF

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	2	9	22.2	22.0
Rarely True	2	7	22.2	17.1
Occasionally True	2	17	22.2	41.5
Often True	3	5	33.3	12.2
Almost Always True	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>7.3</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A40

WHEN I DISLIKE INDIVIDUALS GREATLY, I TRY NOT
TO SHOW IT IN WHAT I SAY OR HOW I SAY IT

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	0	7	0.0	17.1
Rarely True	0	3	0.0	7.3
Occasionally True	4	10	44.4	24.4
Often True	2	11	22.2	26.8
Almost Always True	<u>3</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>33.3</u>	<u>24.4</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A41

I LIKE POKING FUN AT PEOPLE WHO DO THINGS WHICH
ARE VERY STUPID IN ORDER TO STIMULATE
THEIR INTELLIGENCE

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	4	21	44.4	51.2
Rarely True	2	12	22.2	29.3
Occasionally True	2	3	22.2	7.3
Often True	1	4	11.1	9.8
Almost Always True	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>2.4</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A42

WHEN I ATTACK PERSONS' IDEAS, I TRY NOT
TO DAMAGE THEIR SELF-CONCEPT

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	0	6	0.0	14.6
Rarely True	3	3	33.3	7.3
Occasionally True	3	10	33.3	24.4
Often True	2	12	22.2	29.3
Almost Always True	<u>1</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>24.4</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A43

WHEN I TRY TO INFLUENCE PEOPLE, I MAKE A
GREAT EFFORT NOT TO OFFEND THEM

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	1	4	11.1	9.8
Rarely True	0	7	0.0	17.1
Occasionally True	3	6	33.3	14.6
Often True	2	15	22.2	36.6
Almost Always True	<u>3</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>33.3</u>	<u>22.0</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A44

WHEN PEOPLE DO THINGS WHICH ARE MEAN OR
CRUEL, I ATTACK THEIR CHARACTER IN ORDER
TO HELP CORRECT THEIR BEHAVIOR

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	2	15	22.2	36.6
Rarely True	4	11	44.4	26.8
Occasionally True	2	9	22.2	22.0
Often True	0	4	0.0	9.8
Almost Always True	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>4.9</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A45

I REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE IN ARGUMENTS WHEN
THEY INVOLVE PERSONAL ATTACK

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	2	5	22.2	12.2
Rarely True	2	3	22.2	7.3
Occasionally True	1	12	11.1	29.3
Often True	3	11	33.3	26.8
Almost Always True	<u>1</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>24.4</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A46

WHEN NOTHING SEEMS TO WORK IN TRYING TO INFLUENCE
OTHERS, I YELL AND SCREAM IN ORDER TO GET
SOME MOVEMENT FROM THEM

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	5	23	55.6	56.1
Rarely True	1	10	11.1	24.4
Occasionally True	2	6	22.2	14.6
Often True	1	2	11.1	4.9
Almost Always True	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A47

WHEN I AM NOT ABLE TO REFUTE OTHERS' POSITIONS,
I TRY TO MAKE THEM FEEL DEFENSIVE IN
ORDER TO WEAKEN THEIR POSITIONS

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	5	11	55.6	26.8
Rarely True	3	18	33.3	43.9
Occasionally True	0	10	0.0	24.4
Often True	0	1	0.0	2.4
Almost Always True	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>2.4</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

TABLE A48

WHEN AN ARGUMENT SHIFTS TO PERSONAL ATTACKS,
I TRY VERY HARD TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT

Responses	Frequency		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Almost Never True	0	4	0.0	9.8
Rarely True	5	5	55.6	12.2
Occasionally True	1	7	11.1	17.1
Often True	2	14	22.2	34.1
Almost Always True	<u>1</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>11.1</u>	<u>26.8</u>
Total	9	41	100.0	100.0

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